



# IDNR – Fisheries

## 2017 Lake Status Summary

### Lake Taylorville



**Location:** Southeast edge of Taylorville, 30 miles SE of Springfield

**Area:** 1286 acres

**Lake history and characteristics:** Lake Taylorville is a shallow lake with an average depth of only 7 feet. Care should be taken when operating water crafts, especially in the upper end of the lake. The lake has a very large watershed (72:1), thus has suffered from extreme siltation in the past several decades. The watershed and lake were rehabilitated in the 1990's and a dozen silt retention basins were built to capture sediment before it enters the lake. The Division of Fisheries entered into a formal Cooperative Management Agreement in 1992 with the City of Taylorville to manage the sport fishery. Below is a list of the fish species that are doing well in Lake Taylorville.

**Largemouth bass:** The 2017 fall fish survey showed lower catch rates of largemouth bass than desired with only 25 fish/hr of electrofishing. However, the largemouth bass were in average body condition and were present in several year classes, just not in the abundance desired. Most population structural indices were within the desired range. Largemouth bass ranged from 2-20" and weighed up to 5.8 lbs. Over 45,000 largemouth bass have been stocked into Lake Taylorville between 1993 and 2004 to supplement year class strength. By 2004, the population was stable enough to sustain itself through natural reproduction. Anglers can catch largemouth bass off of points, deadfalls, and stickups in the warmer months of the year with plastic worms, jigs, spinners, crank baits, minnows, crayfish and worms. The biggest bass that has ever been collected while electrofishing in Lake Taylorville weighed 6.7 lbs and measured 22" long.

**White crappie:** Over 60,000 white crappie have been stocked into Lake Taylorville over the last 20 years to supplement year class strength. By 2003, the population was stable enough to sustain itself through natural reproduction. The white crappie population is doing well as far as quantity, even though our 2017 sample (46 fish) was much lower than in past years. The 2017 fall fish survey showed the population still displays a bottle neck at 9". Seventy-five percent of crappie collected in 2016 measured between 7-9" and were in poor body condition. This trend continued in 2017 with 64 percent of the crappie collected falling into the 7-9" range. The high density of crappie in this size range is reducing growth potential due to competition for food resources. Crappie <9" need to be thinned out to reduce the bottle neck and increase growth rates. A new crappie regulation was implemented on April 1, 2017. The new regulation is 25 fish/day harvest limit, with harvest of no more than 10 fish greater than or equal to 10". The intent of this regulation is to reduce crowding at 7-9" fish, reduce the bottle neck effect, and increase growth rates. This regulation change should yield larger, fatter crappies. Anglers can catch white crappie around submerged structures throughout the lake in the spring and fall with spinners, jigs and minnows.

**Channel catfish:** The channel catfish population remains good, although few fish were collected in the fall 2017 sample (N=5). Standardized electrofishing is not the most effective method to assess the channel catfish population. Gill nets or low frequency, pulsed-DC electrofishing are more appropriate gears, but manpower and time constraints don't allow for the extra effort. Channel catfish >21" are on the contaminant list and it is suggested that no more than one meal per week be consumed. There is no restriction for fish under 21". Anglers can catch channel catfish near deadfalls and stickups in the warmer months throughout the lake using bottom fishing techniques with cut bait, shrimp, chicken livers or night crawlers. The largest channel catfish collected by electrofishing in Lake Taylorville measured 28" and weighed over 14 lbs.

**Sauger:** No sauger were collected in the 2017 survey. The sauger population remains poor. They have been stocked annually for 18 years using both fingerling fish from the hatchery and advanced fingerlings from the on-site nursery ponds. Even with this effort we see very few in the population surveys. Only one sauger was collected in the 2016 survey. 16,506 1.4" sauger were stocked by LaSalle Fish Hatchery on June 13, 2017. The program will continue for a few more years, but additional evaluations are necessary to determine if further stockings are warranted. Anglers have reported good catches below the spillway in the spring, which indicates spillway escapement. Spillway escapement may provide good sauger fishing downstream of the spillway, but not for Lake

Taylorville. Nice sauger can be caught in the tail-water fishing area at the base of the dam in the spring or fall using minnows, night crawlers, jigs, crank baits, spoons and spinners.

**Bluegill:** Since 2010, few bluegill >7" have been collected. The majority of bluegill collected measure between 6-7" and showed less than desired body condition. Subsampling bluegill can introduce sampling biases and can affect catch rates from year to year. Bluegill populations do not thrive in the presence of gizzard shad. Gizzard shad and bluegill compete for the same food source, therefore show poor growth rates and reduced maximum size. Anglers can catch bluegill on their spawning beds in the spring or near shoreline cover year round with worms, crickets, or night crawlers.

**Other fish species:** A total of 19 fish species have been collected in Lake Taylorville since 1993. While their numbers and potential for successful angling are low, anglers may find themselves catching green sunfish, green sunfish x bluegill hybrid, yellow bullhead, or freshwater drum.

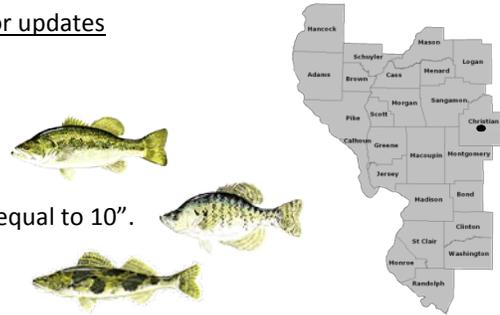
**Fishing Regulations:** see the Fishing Regulation Booklet or [IFISHILLINOIS.org](http://IFISHILLINOIS.org) for updates

**2 pole and line fishing only**

**Largemouth bass** - 15" minimum length limit with a creel limit of 6 per day.

**Crappie** – 25 fish/day creel of which no more than 10 can measure greater or equal to 10".

**Sauger** – state wide - 14" minimum length limit with a creel limit of 6 per day.



	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Management Objectives
<b>Largemouth Bass</b>													
% >12"	50	60	45	54	53	53	61	56	86	49	56	52	40-60
% >15"	21	19	25	11	12	25	31	27	16	30	13	15	10-25
% >18"	2	4	3	1	1	2	9	4	4	2	5	7	1-5
% >20"	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	3	4	1-5
condition	105	102	106	101	97	101	108	105	100	95	98	98	90-110
fish/hr EF	89	123	41	89	110	106	89	47	44	55	51	25	>60
<b>White Crappie</b>													
% >8"	65	79	80	95	85	77	92	46	58	16	37	41	50-70
% >9"	33	52	-	64	-	50	62	32	19	12	35	26	30-50
% >10"	12	35	14	28	31	33	25	25	8	8	18	15	15-30
% >12"	1	0	0	2	1	2	2	2	0	1	2	0	1-5
condition	98	94	99	93	94	94	95	91	93	89	92	90	90-100
fish/hr EF	487	203	138	168	116	127	146	247	202	522	230	46	70-120
<b>Channel Catfish</b>													
% >16"	-	56	67	25	67	100	94	80	56	0	83	57	50-70
% >18"	-	22	67	17	56	33	77	60	44	19	58	14	15-30
% >22"	-	0	50	0	11	0	13	20	22	5	8	14	5-10
condition	-	-	-	-	94	92	98	96	95	90	88	92	90-100
fish/hr EF	1	6	3	6	3	3	8	3	3	11	7	5	10-15
<b>Sauger</b>													
% >12"	-	50	-	33	44	25	50	100	83	64	-	-	40-60
% >14"	-	-	-	0	11	0	0	100	17	17	-	-	20-40
% >18"	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	-	-	10-20
% >20"	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	5-10
condition	-	93	-	102	87	90	73	105	86	83	86	-	90-110
fish/hr EF	1	1	-	8	5	2	1	0	5	19	1	-	15-25

**Aquatic vegetation and/or chemical treatment:** none

**Fisheries Management Activities Completed:**

-Conducted a fall fish population survey utilizing standard sampling protocol. (2-40 min pulsed-DC electrofishing surveys) on 10/3/2017.

-16,506 1.4" sauger were stocked by LaSalle Fish Hatchery on June 13, 2017